

05

THE  
CHARGE  
OF  
MISREPRESENTATIONS

Maintain'd against

Dean *Sherlock's*

PREFACE to his ANSWER to the  
Lord Bishop of *Bangor's*  
Late B O O K,

Entituled,  
*The Common Rights of Subjects*  
*Defended, &c.*

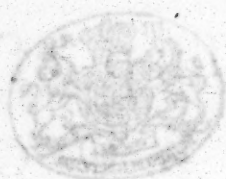
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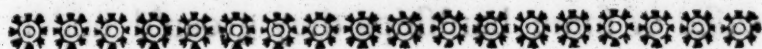
By JAMES PEIRCE.

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T H E  
C H A R G E  
O F  
MISREPRESENTATIONS  
Maintain'd &c.



WHEN the Dean of *Chichester* was pleased, in his *Vindication of the Corporation and Test Acts*, to allege some passages of my *Letter to Dr. Snape*, he did it in a manner which appear'd very shocking to many others, as well as myself. The abuse was indeed so gross, that I was persuaded it could not fail to be censur'd by all that had any sense of honour and justice. Nor was I mistaken; for immediately 'twas complain'd of by several, strangers as well as acquaintance. The policy of his management must be acknowleg'd to have been extremely fine, but such as could hardly be expected from any person, except the Dean.



When the dissenters were expecting to be eased of some hardships they groan'd under, what could be more likely to prevent it, than the inflaming mens passions against them? For this end he seem'd to pass a complement upon me, *Vindic.* p. 43. that he might the more sharpen the weapon he put into our enemies hands, for the wounding our whole body.

The Dean knows as well as any man, that a present turn may be serv'd by a malicious representation, before the injur'd person can have an opportunity to clear himself; and that his defence (if he makes any) may not come to the view of all, who have receiv'd an ill impression concerning him. He is well enough appris'd, how industrious party zeal usually makes men, to spread a calumny, which they apprehend may be useful to their cause. I have the more reason to complain of this usage, because I am assur'd, that, even since my Defence was publish'd, the Dean's example has been followed by others; who have given the same invidious turn to my innocent expressions, in some public meetings of the clergy, and, I wish I could not say, in a much more honourable assembly.

The Dean's *Vindication* being written in answer to my Lord Bishop of *Bangor*, his usage of me could not but come in his Lordship's way,



way, who has accordingly taken notice of it, *The common rights of subjects defended, &c.* p. 204. His Lordship has discover'd so impartial and exact a judgment thro' his whole management of the controversy, that I cannot but expect what he says will be regarded by all equal judges; and the paragraph, wherein he speaks of this matter, being very much to my advantage, no one will wonder that I am careful to present the reader with it. Thus then it stands in his Lordship's most excellent piece, wherein I account it a great honour to be mentioned, for which I am much indebted to the Dean.

‘ What the Dean has quoted here, out of  
 ‘ *Mr. Peirce, &c.* tends indeed to inflame mens  
 ‘ hearts in the cause; but not to enlighten  
 ‘ their understandings. It belongs to others  
 ‘ to demand justice in this case. They have  
 ‘ done it, by shewing the most gross misun-  
 ‘ derstanding, or misrepresentation of their  
 ‘ words, that was almost ever seen. But they  
 ‘ were moving words: and the passage in the  
 ‘ Dean's book is too lively and considerable to  
 ‘ be parted with. It takes up too many pages,  
 ‘ and its absence would make a great void in  
 ‘ the argument: and therefore, *Let it still*  
 ‘ *stand* in all the editions of the book, without  
 ‘ any public notice, much less alteration of the  
 ‘ mistake.

‘ mistake. But good and reasonable christi-  
 ‘ ans will blush for those, who thus refuse  
 ‘ to *do unto others what they would that others*  
 ‘ *should do unto them.*

I am glad the Dean in his *preface* owns this to be a *charge of an high nature*; for I was ready to guess, from his way of writing, that he esteem’d it a meer trifle, to which a man might expose himself without the least concern. He says, that *in this charge his Lordship is not principal, but appears only as a second to Mr. Peirce.* But any one may see by his Lordship’s words, that he apprehended not any need I had of a *second* in so plain a case; and therefore descended not to particulars, but refer’d only in general to the Defence I had already made. I am sorry his Lordship should meet with the contempt of being called my *second*, meerly for expressing a just abhorrence of the baseness with which I was misrepresented. This seems to me a compassion which is due to wronged innocence, and very becoming any person of a generous temper, even when he do’s not favour a man’s argument, and much less would be thought to *appear as his second.* And the Dean above all men, one would think, should have been sensible, that his Lordship might complain, as he do’s, with a very different design

sign. He has met with so much trouble of the like nature from those who have been writing against him, that he may well be allow'd for his own sake to endeavour to shame men, if possible, out of such a disingenuous way of managing controversies.

The Dean *thinks, that had his Lordship been describing the most profligate degree of shamelessness, he could not have laid on stronger colours.* But as his Lordship apprehends his *misrepresentation* of my words to be *the most gross that was almost ever seen,* the *description* could not have been lively enough, if it had been made in fainter colours. The Dean may call the Bishop's *usage* of him *unparallel'd*; but I hope to satisfy all *good and reasonable christians,* that his own *usage* of me do's much better deserve that name.

'Twill be allow'd, I hope, that to take distant parts of any writing, and join them together, as tho' they were concerning one and the same subject, when they really are not, and by this art to endeavour to fasten upon an adversary an odious meaning, he never intended, is as abusive and *gross a misrepresentation* as can well be. This is what I charged the Dean with in my *Reflections*; and I shall now make good my charge.

The



The Dean in his *Vindication*, p. 40. cites these words from my *Letter to Dr. Snape*, p. 5. "How could you suggest we don't so much as pretend the terms of your communion are sinful?" And then he adds: *And he goes on to give instances of sinful terms in our communion; and then, in the name of all his brethren, he passes a judgment that makes the whole ecclesiastical constitution sinful.* Here he again cites my words, p. 6. "You may depend upon it, that the great body of the dissenters judge the terms of communion to be sinfully impos'd." Upon which he thus comments: *This strikes not at one, or at many of our terms of communion, but at the whole establishment; the foundation itself is sin, and nothing good can be raised on it: and therefore he very frankly and consistently declares*, p. 30. "We rejoice to see the foundations shaken, and the fabric sinking, as we never doubted but it would some time or other."

Here I lay the ground of one charge against the Dean, that he makes this last sentence, tho' it stands at the distance of twenty-four pages from the others, to be spoken concerning the same thing, when any man may see plainly it is not. The reader may observe, how careful the Dean is in his comments upon my words, p. 5, 6. to impress him strongly,

ly, that I was there speaking of the *whole ecclesiastical constitution*, the *whole establishment*; and very artfully he represents me as making the *FOUNDATION* itself to be a sin, tho' I use not the word *foundation* in that place. Thus a mist is cast before the reader's eyes; and being prepossess'd that I speak of the *foundation* in one place, he is more easily brought to believe I speak of the same *foundation* in the other. If men of common sense and honesty can read the whole paragraph, wherein the latter sentence is contain'd, and believe I am justly dealt with; I will be content to lie under the severest censure for my charge against the Dean, while he shall pass for a fair writer. But if the contrary appears, I hope some will blush for him, who cannot blush for himself.

Let the reader now mind how that sentence comes in. Dr. *Snape* had reproach'd the dissenters, and among them myself by name, for being silent, and not defending *Calvin*, when he was condemn'd by Mr. *Pillonniere* as a friend to persecution. I tell the Dr. in answer: " That we never profess'd a religious  
 " adherence to the opinion of *Calvin*, or  
 " any other uninspir'd writer whatever. 'And after some other things, I add: " Certainly  
 " *men* have been too much led by an *implicit*

“ *faith*, among *all parties* of christians: and  
 “ ’tis high time now to discard all *uncertain*  
 “ and *fallible* authorities, and to depend up-  
 “ on plain reason and scripture. I am glad,  
 “ when I see that *mean* and *servile temper* give  
 “ way to a more *noble* and *generous* way of  
 “ thinking; and men seek to govern their  
 “ *faith* and *practice*, not by the *great names* of  
 “ *men, churches, councils, convocations, or as-*  
 “ *semblies*; but by the *only rule, the word of*  
 “ *God*. This is what we have always pro-  
 “ fess’d; and I am much mistaken, if we are  
 “ like to be moved by any reasons you have  
 “ brought to the contrary. We can’t see the  
 “ *CAUSE OF SLAVERY* thrives under your  
 “ management, which is a mean defence a-  
 “ gainst a noble and brave opposition.”  
 Then follows the sentence he has thought fit  
 to pervert. “ We rejoice to see the *foundations*  
 “ *shaken*, and the *fabric sinking*, as we never  
 “ doubted but it would some time or other.”  
 To which I added: “ We are pleased to see  
 “ you are sensible your skill fails you, and  
 “ that you begin to cry out for help. And  
 “ believe it, we will not at this time of day  
 “ abandon a *noble principle*, which we have al-  
 “ ways held, either to gratify your *persecuting*  
 “ *humour*, or to secure the reputation of our  
 “ much admir’d *Calvin*.

Let



Let any reader now try, if he can find a single word in the whole passage, that should incline him to think I was speaking particularly of the church of *England*, of the *whole ecclesiastical constitution*, the *whole establishment*, or the *foundation* of it. Dr. *Snape* gave me no occasion for it in this place, who was calling upon me to defend the cause of *Calvin* and presbytery, meaning really thereby the cause of *slavery* and *persecution*. I am speaking against an evil with which I suppose *all parties*, and consequently my own, have been more or less chargable. We have indeed always avow'd the principle, that the word of God is the only rule ; but I fear we have not been so steady to it, as never to receive any thing too easily upon trust, when it has come recommended to us by the names of great and good men, or such bodies of them as we have highly esteem'd. The *foundations* and *fabric* I speak of might easily be perceiv'd, by those of a very ordinary capacity, to be the same with the *cause of slavery*, mention'd in the immediately foregoing sentence : and such a man as the Dean could not possibly mistake it, but thro' inexcusable carelessness, or a much worse cause. I should have charitably hoped his gross misrepresentation might be owing to the former of these, had

he not constrain'd me to a more disagreeable opinion of him, by persisting in it, after I had clear'd my self.

If my *charge* against him was *very modest*, as he says ; I assure him the reason was not, because I thought the injury did not deserve to be spoken of in severer terms ; but that I might by my soft answer give him as little offence as possible : which I thought was the most likely way to work upon his ingenuity, if he had any, and ingage him to do me justice. But the continuing the abuse in all the editions of his Book, after I had defended myself, is such an aggravation, as will justify his Lordship's severer expressions.

When the Dean had transcribed the above mention'd passage, he subjoin'd these words in his moving strain : *What hopes, what triumphs are these !* With relation to them I said, *Reflect.* p. 41. " Nor can I see, why the Dean  
 " should be offended either with my *hopes*, or  
 " *triumphs*, upon the prevailing of true and  
 " generous principles ; especially when 'tis un-  
 " der the management of so bright an orna-  
 " ment of his own communion." Upon this the Dean in the *Preface* to his late *Answer &c.* makes his animadversions. 'Tis to be observ'd here, says he, that Mr. Peirce changes the ideas quite ; which is not answering, but  
 shifting

shifting the charge. He was to tell us, what he meant by rejoicing to see foundations shaken : and he answers : That he rejoices to see true principles prevail. This is not to the purpose : the question is : What were the foundations, which in his prophetic dream he beheld shaking ; and what the ground of his joy in their approaching ruine ?

The Dean has now much mended the matter ; and to clear himself from one *misrepresentation* has run into another. I had before shewn what *foundations* I meant, by transcribing the preceding sentence ; but that it might appear that I meant no other than the *cause of slavery*, I put these words in transcribing them in *Italic* ; which I thought was as much as was necessary to make the sense obvious. Having thus clear'd my meaning, there could be no hurt in varying my expression, when I came to reply to his insult ; and especially since that variation served to shew any one, who was willing to understand me, in what way the *foundations* of the *cause of slavery* were shaken ; namely, by the *prevailing of true and generous principles* ; which are indeed as opposite to the *cause of slavery*, as the Bishop of Bangor is to the Dean of Chichester. He may, if he pleases, attribute my joy to a *prophetic dream* : I assure him, it proceeds from the  
most



most wakeful observations I have been able to make of the progress of the present controversy. When I see what weapons such a man as he is forc'd to use in it, I conclude the *cause of slavery* is not to be supported by reason and argument: I *rejoice*, or, if he likes the word better, I *triumph*, that such *generous principles* now prevail, as cannot but shake the *foundations of slavery and persecution*. And if my joy upon this account is any offence to the Dean, it must be owing to his tender concern for either a bad cause, or the reputation of his own management.

But to go on with the Dean: *Look*, saith he, *into his first Book, and you'll find churches, councils, and convocations were the sinking fabrics*. And is not this to *change the ideas quite*? If *churches* in general are the *fabrics* I rejoice to see sinking, I must rejoice to see christianity itself sink; which I will not yet believe the Dean do's suppose to be true of me. I assure him I shall always rejoice to see it flourish. If the *sinking fabrics* are to be explain'd from that remoter sentence, 'tis evident they are not the *churches, councils, or convocations* themselves; but their being made a rule for mens faith and practice; as may appear by what he immediately adds: *In the very passage from which I quoted his words*, " he  
" is

“ is glad to see men seek to govern their  
 “ faith and *practice*, not by the great names  
 “ of men, *churches, councils, convocations*, or as-  
 “ semblies; but by the only rule, the word of  
 “ God. ” *And he presently adds: “ We re-*  
 “ *joice to see the foundations shaken, and*  
 “ *the fabric sinking.* ” I will not ask him,  
 by what logic? but I think I may, with  
 what conscience he so intirely perverts the  
 plain meaning of words? Are *churches*, and  
*mens governing their faith and practice by the*  
*names of churches*, the same things with him?  
 I can't here but observe a little of the Dean's  
 art. In citing my words he has been care-  
 ful to put *churches, councils, convocations*, in a  
 different character from *assemblies*. I can hard-  
 ly doubt of his designing to serve some pur-  
 pose by this; because in the same paragraph  
 he twice refers to those words, and mentions  
*churches, councils, and convocations*, and intirely  
 leaves out *assemblies*. The reader by casting  
 back his eye upon the quotation, and seeing  
 those three words so remarkably distinguish'd,  
 might easily be led to think, that however I  
 do not expressly mention the church of *En-*  
*gland*, yet I design'd it particularly and solely,  
 as they are wont to talk so much of *churches,*  
*councils, and convocations*; whereas 'tis plain by  
 the addition of *assemblies*, if that were allowed

to be as much taken notice of as the rest, that I speak with an equal reference to my own, and all other parties.

Let us now hear the Dean's reasoning upon my words. *What now, says he, was the fabric that was sinking? was it not the authority of men, churches, councils, and convocations; which, it seems, can no more prescribe rules for mens practice, or behaviour in the Church, than they can make a new faith?* And has he not here again *changed the ideas quite?* Did he not just before represent me as making the *churches, councils and convocations themselves the sinking fabric?* Was it not absolutely necessary that he should do so, in order to vindicate himself in his first charge, That I rejoic'd to see the fabric of the church sinking? But now instead of my making the *church* the sinking fabric (which is the only thing to his purpose) I am only charged as making the *authority of the church* to be it. Had the Dean only charged me with rejoicing to see the authority of the church to govern the faith and practice of christians, without the scriptures, to see this, I say, shaken; I should not have troubled him with the complaint I did: for that is, I confess, a great part of the *cause of slavery*, which I rejoice to see sinking.

'Tis



'Tis indeed my opinion, That the church has no other authority than to execute the laws of *Christ* ; and that no one is any more bound to submit to their rules, as to his behaviour, when he do's not see them warrant- ed by reason and scripture ; than he is to receive a new faith from them upon trust. Herein he knows I am not singular ; and somewhat more than the setting down the opinion is necessary to expose it.

He adds : *And Mr. Peirce thinks the generous principle of refusing all obedience to churches, councils, and convocations is now prevailing under the management of a bright ornament of our own communion.* This is another stretch of my words. I have never said, that 'twas a *generous principle to refuse all obedience to churches.* I am for yielding obedience to them *in the Lord* ; that is, when men obey him at the same time. I think it a generous principle, That every man has a right to judge for himself in matters of religion ; and that no one is bound to believe or practice any thing, but as he sees evidence of its being the dictate of reason, or revelation. And this principle, I own, do's in my apprehension very much prevail under the management of a bright ornament of the Dean's own communion. Nor can I see how 'tis possible it should do otherwise, if strength

of argument will certainly prevail against specious sophistry. And I will, according to what he next says, again *frankly own, that I do*, and hope all *my brethren the dissenters* will, *look on rejoicing to see the foundations shaken, and the fabric sinking*; I mean, of an implicit faith, and a blind obedience.

The Dean finishes this head with a stroke for the passions. *How right*, says he, *Mr. Peirce may be in his judgment of our weak and tottering condition, I will not inquire: but I say again; What hopes, what triumphs are these!* Methinks I sympathize with the Dean's friends, in the melancholy concern in which he has left them by this moving passage. But what an addition must it be to their grief, when they shall be forc'd to observe, that the Dean himself could find no better way to raise their passions in the cause of the church, than by confounding it with the cause of slavery. This is the cause which the Dean seems willing to defend; and he need not go far to *enquire in how weak and tottering a condition* it is, if it is not to be defended by some other way than by argument; for no man can know it better, than he do's already himself. And yet the Dean ought not to be offended at my hopes and triumphs, when I see persecution so bravely expos'd and baffled: nay he ought

to join with me in them, if he *can*, as he tells us, *Vindic.* p. 45. *with a clear mind say, he has always pleaded against persecution?*

Let any impartial judge now say, whether my first charge of misrepresentations has not been made good. I proceed to another, grounded upon what immediately follows in the forecited page 41. of his *Vindication*. *But to go on: He charges the church, p. 24. with persecution; and all who differ from the Bishop of Bangor in the present controversy as maintainers of it: agreeably to which he represents the dissenters, as the holy remnant who have not bowed the knee to Baal, p. 38. So that the church of England in this comparrison (and should seem therefore in this Gentleman's opinion) is an idolatress, and her priests are the priests of Baal. He again returns to it, p. 43. I should not have wonder'd, had one of their ignorant mechanics represented the clergy of England as priests of Baal; but 'tis surprizing to hear this from a man of letters, &c.— And 'tis an intimation at least, what purposes are to be served by that power, to which some are now so eagerly pleading their right: and let every man, who wishes well to the church of England judge from hence, what he is to expect, if ever offices of power and trust are lodg'd in dissenters hands. Will they permit, do you think, the priests of*



Baal to live unmolested, or will they endure that the church of England, whose foundation is sin, should be permitted to stand? No; &c.

My complaint of this misrepresentation also was express'd in the softest terms, which 'tis necessary for me here again to repeat. " This  
 " is not (said I, *Reflect.* p. 41.) a just repre-  
 " sentation of my sense, tho' I don't much  
 " complain of him, since he has used me  
 " much better than he has the Bishop of  
 " Bangor. Those words have no relation to  
 " to the church of England in particular.  
 " The case is thus: Mr. Pillonniere had com-  
 " plain'd of the smalness of the number of  
 " those protestants in general, who had gone  
 " upon the true and only defensible principle  
 " of the reformation; that is, who were a-  
 " gainst persecution; and among others, he  
 " seem'd to me, to reckon the dissenters to  
 " be friends to persecution. He express'd  
 " likewise his judgment, that the extreme  
 " smalness of the number of those who were  
 " for toleration, and against persecution,  
 " was the only reason why the reformed  
 " religion did not more prevail in the world.  
 Now when I had asserted that the dissen-  
 ters declared for toleration, I added:  
 " And I hope 'twill be a comfort to him,  
 " who complains of the smalness of the num-  
 " ber

“ ber of those, who go upon the true and on-  
 “ ly defensible ground of the reformation, to  
 “ hear, that God *has reserved to himself*, I don’t  
 “ say *seven*, but many times *seven thousand*,  
 “ *who have not bowed the knee, &c.* ” I did  
 “ not so much as put in the word *Baal* ;  
 “ and when ’tis added, ’tis evident that only  
 “ persecution (which is a great idol with  
 “ some men) is compar’d with *Baal*. And  
 “ as one half of those whom Mr. *Pillonniere*  
 “ commends as being against persecution,  
 “ are of the church of *England*, and must be  
 “ manifestly join’d with those *who have not*  
 “ *bow’d the knee* ; so the charge can’t be un-  
 “ derstood as brought against the church of  
 “ *England* in general ; but only against those  
 “ in that, or any other church, who are for  
 “ persecution. And therefore his complaint  
 “ of me here, and again, p. 43. where he re-  
 “ news it, is wholly groundless.

This was my defence ; and the Dean ha-  
 ving transcrib’d it in his preface, goes on  
 thus : *I have inserted this passage at large, that*  
*I may be sure of not injuring Mr. Peirce. And*  
*now I desire the reader to observe, 1. That*  
*Mr. Peirce do’s not deny that he charged the*  
*church of England with persecution. 2. He*  
*owns that in his comparison, the idol persecu-*  
*cution is meant by Baal. This is all that I charg’d*  
*him with : and this is all confess’d.* His

His first observation is true : I have, tho' not there, yet in another place, *charged the church of England with persecution* ; that is, I have charged many in that church to have been guilty of it. The church of *England* has always been divided into two parties, whereof the one has been for, the other against persecution : when the former has prevail'd, as it has for the most part, the cause of persecution has been advanc'd, and laws have been made, the *severity of which* the Dean himself says *he cannot approve*, p. 34. But the other party, who have been fond perhaps of the episcopacy and liturgy of the church of *England*, have been enemies to persecution : and I am far from charging them with it ; as appears from what the Dean takes notice of, That I charge all, *who differ from the Bishop of Bangor* in this present controversy, *as maintainers of persecution* : and consequently I must be understood to except him, and all who agree with him, out of the charge. And such ways of speaking of the church are not unusual with the churchmen themselves.

As to his second observation : 'Tis true that in my comparison by *Baal* is meant *persecution*, which is a *great idol* with some men, that is, they are extremely fond of it. But is this all the Dean charged me with ?

No ;



No ; he charg'd me with two things more, without having the least foundation for either of them. 1. That I represented the *clergy of England* as *priests of Baal* ; whereas I say nothing like it, nor so much as mention either the *clergy of England*, or *priests of Baal*. The persons whom I speak of in that place, are such as are among all parties in the world, both foreign protestants and *English* dissenters, as well as the church of *England*. So that 'tis with the utmost violence and injustice, that my words are made a representation of the *clergy*. 2. In order to make this look the more plausible, I am made to represent *the dissenters*, as *the holy remnant*, which have not bowed the knee to Baal. I never so much as use the words, *the holy remnant*, nor can I be understood to imply there *the dissenters* are *THE holy remnant*, as appears by two things : 1. Because I do not speak of all the dissenters, as I must have done, if the dissenters stood here in opposition to the church of *England*, according to the Dean's account ; but only of those dissenters, who are for universal toleration. For when I say, " That protestant dissenters *generally* declare " for toleration ; " 'tis evident I pretend not to assert, they do it *universally*. 2. I cannot be said to represent the dissenters as

THE

*THE holy remnant*, because such a representation must be understood to make the whole of that remnant ; whereas I speak only of many of them, as making but a *part* of those who have not bowed the knee to *Baal* ; and acknowlege there are many others among foreign protestants, and in the church of *England*. Had not the Dean join'd this latter misrepresentation, the other would not have look'd at all plausible. He may please himself with the art and dexterity of his management : but I am perswaded the more this appears, the more studied, wilful, and malicious the misrepresentation will be esteem'd by all impartial judges.

Let us go on with the Dean. *It remains only to be consider'd, what ground there was for the consequence I deduced from these positions, viz. that this comparison represents the church of England as an idolatress, and her priests as the priests of Baal.* But it should have been remember'd, that 'tis one thing to deduce a consequence from what an adversary sais, and quit another to charge him with *making a representation* of which he says not one word. The latter was the Dean's charge against me, tho' he would now dissemble it. What less than this can he mean, when he sais he *should not have wonder'd, had one of our ignorant*

*rant mechanics represented the clergy of England as priests of Baal ; but that 'tis surprizing to hear this from me. 'Tis accounted unjust to impute to a man the consequences of his opinion, if he himself do's not perceive they are such, or do's not own them as his sentiments. By proving the consequences to be natural, you endeavour to convince him of his mistake; but by charging him with holding them, you wound his reputation : and the injury is still greater, when there is really no connexion between his positions, and the consequences which he is charged to hold. And that this injury has been done me, will still farther appear as we proceed with the Dean.*

*If in this, says he, I drew a false consequence, I should be glad to have it shewn to be so, by Mr. Peirce, or the Bishop for him. That his Lordship may not by any very unnecessary trouble be diverted from nobler work, I shall readily undertake to gratify the Dean myself. The consequence, says he, stands thus :*

*The priests of that church which sets up an idol, are the priests of that idol.*

*But the church of England sets up the idol Baal [persecution.]*

*Therefore the priests of the church of England are priests of Baal.*

If the Dean did not seem to me to hector both the Bishop and myself with his demon-

D

stration



stration, which for the heightening his triumph he has pretended to put into a syllogism, I should not trouble him about the form of it, but should have contented myself with rectifying it. As it now stands 'tis a very wretched one, according to all the logics which I ever saw. One rule which they use to give is, That the *terminus minor*, or the subject of the conclusion, must be join'd with the *terminus medius* in the *minor* proposition ; whereas the *terminus minor*, which is, *the priests of the church of England*, do's not appear in the *minor* proposition at all. And hence the syllogism is contrary to another rule of logic, That it has more than three terms. The Dean who would here insult the Bishop, as well as me, with his logic, will pardon me if I rectify his argument a little for him. And with a submission to better judgments I conceive it ought to stand thus :

The priests of that church which sets up an idol, are the priests of that idol.

But the priests of the church of *England*, are priests of that church which sets up an idol [*Baal* or persecution].

Therefore the priests of the church of *England*, are the priests of that idol [*Baal* or persecution.]

I will venture to trust the Dean's own judgment, that I have put his argument into

a better form than he has done himself. And therefore, instead of putting him off with barely telling him that his own argument is a *paralogism*, which yet is allow'd to be a sufficient answer, I will distinctly reply to it, as I have reform'd it. As to the *major* proposition then; I deny it, as it stands in either his, or my own forming the argument. The priests of that church which sets up an idol, are not necessarily the priests of that idol; unless he supposes them to be such priests, as actually attend the service of that idol. If he understands his *major* proposition under this limitation, I grant it; but then I deny his *minor*: But the priests of the church of *England* are priests of that church which sets up an idol, and minister in the service of that idol. And his *minor* he ought to prove to be my assertion, since he is arguing from thence. But where do I say any such thing? Nay, how plainly is that contrary to the sense of my words? This kind of arguing, which the Dean stoops to, is a very ready way to secure him the reputation of an unfair disputant.

In his next paragraph he tells us: *Mr. Peirce says farther, that his words [who have not bowed the knee, &c.] have no relation to the church of England in particular; very*

*true, for I think he meant to charge all establish'd churches that are, or ever were ; but is the reflection the less injurious to the church of England? Is it any consolation to us to be told, that the churches of Christ, from the days of Constantine at least, have bowed the knee to Baal?*

The reader sees the church of *England* is not so much as named in the paragraph ; and therefore he may judge with what equity my expression was interpreted. Nor is it very fair in the Dean now to say, I *meant to charge all establish'd churches*. One would think he should not have overlook'd the very next words to those he has been torturing :  
 “ I think too, he [*Mr. Pillonniere*] is unjust  
 “ to the *protestants*, by representing them in  
 “ general as *friends to persecution*. How little of  
 “ this is to be met with in the neighbouring  
 “ *seven provinces*, or in general among the  
 “ *Calvinists* at this day ?

I was not designing *the consolation of the church of England*, but of *Mr. Pillonniere*, to whom I was satisfied what I said would be a *consolation*, if I did not mistake the apprehensions he had of us. And let any man read the whole paragraph, and say whether the censure deserves to be heinously resented, when 'tis pass'd upon those for whom I profess a very high value. However the Dean in his case  
 need



need not shun the *consolation*, for there is some in it ; and his own church (if I had spoken particularly of it, as I did not) need not grudge to be tax'd with an evil to which humane nature is so very prone, that few, if any, churches have kept wholly clear of it. I have indeed, as the Dean professes to have likewise, the severest notion of it: yet he may see what allowances I am ready to make for such as have been guilty, *Letter to Dr. Snape*, p. 41. &c. And I am willing to do it as much as I can in the case of churchmen, as well as *Calvin*, and our other reformers. I only wish those learned men, who condemn it in one discourse, or page, would be so consistent as not to justify it in another.

I will save myself the trouble of transcribing his next paragraph, what I have already said being sufficient in answer to it. I proceed to that which follows.

*I am willing to leave it to any impartial man to judge what Mr. Peirce could mean, when after having (in his first Book) laid persecution to the charge of the church of England, he proceeds to vindicate the dissenters against the like charge, and says, they had not bowed the knee, &c.*

I am as willing as the Dean to leave the impartial to judge what I meant. His discourse would indeed insinuate, that after I had  
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fix'd upon the church the charge of persecuti-  
on, I then immediately proceeded to clear  
the opposite party, the dissenters, from the  
like charge; and one would guess by reading  
his words, that this was certainly my grand  
design: whereas, beside the distance of one  
passage from another, that relating to the  
dissenters is merely incidental, brought in up-  
on the occasion of a passage in Mr. *Pillonniere*;  
which I own'd I did not understand, and in  
my guess at the meaning of which it appears  
since I was mistaken.

He adds: *Is not this a strong implication that  
the church, which he pronounced guilty, had bow-  
ed the knee to Baal?* 'Tis often so easy for an  
adversary to imagine that to be a *strong impli-  
cation*, which was design'd for none at all, that  
had the Dean understood me so, he ought to  
have been so modest as to call it only by that  
name, and not have charged me with a *repre-  
sentation* instead of a *strong implication*.

But I have reserv'd it to this place to speak  
a little more fully to this expression of *bow-  
ing the knee to Baal*, upon which the Dean  
has thought fit to make such outcries. The  
expression is allusive; and the Dean is, I be-  
lieve, the first man who ever tortur'd any  
thing of that nature, at so unmerciful a rate,  
in order to reproach an adversary. What  
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could any candid and reasonable man suspect was meant by it ; but to declare, that as *bowing the knee to Baal* was a great wickedness, so I thought persecution was likewise ? This was what I meant ; and could hardly have imagin'd, unless I had seen it, that any man would rack his head to pick out of the expression a charge of idolatry. The Dean himself will justify my words, as not too severe to describe persecution ; since he owns, *Vindic. p. 45. 'tis indeed as bad as it can be describ'd to be.* He knows this has by some of his own church been reckon'd as great a crime among the papists, as the idolatry they are justly charged with. Where then is the hurt of the displeasing passage, which has not one word in it of the church of *England* ? If he may innocently himself declare his bad opinion of persecution, why should he be offended at me for using the same liberty ?

Farther, it seems unaccountable to me, that the comparison I used should have such an invidious consequence forced upon it. It has in time past been thought necessary to make some allowance to comparisons, and that every circumstance of the things compar'd was not requir'd to be exactly alike in them : but I see now they must run on all four. What strange work will this course make in the scriptures



scriptures themselves, if it be taken in treating of all the allusions, comparisons, and parables we meet with there? What a fine train of consequences may such a fruitful invention as the Dean's draw, from our Lord's being said to *come as a thief in the night*? But I will content myself with shewing the absurdity of the Dean's proceeding, by considering how injurious 'tis to the discourse of the apostle, from whom I evidently borrow'd my comparison. His words in the place I refer to, *Rom. xi. 2, 3, 4, 5.* are these: *God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.*

'Tis plain here the apostle's comparison is of the body of the people of *Israel*, who were fallen into idolatry in the days of *Elias*; and the *seven thousand* who then kept themselves free from that wickedness, *not bowing the knee to Baal*, on the one hand: and the unbeliev-  
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ing *Jews* of *St. Paul's* own time ; and the converted *Jews*, which he calls the *remnant*, on the other hand. Let Dean *Sherlock* now make his out-cry against *St. Paul* : let him tell the world, that the unbelieving *Jews*, the established church of his own country, in this comparison (and should seem therefore in *St. Paul's* opinion) were idolaters, and their priests were priests of *Baal*. Let the Dean's own conscience judge, whether *St. Paul* design'd to charge the unbelieving *Jews* as guilty of idolatry, of which all the world acquits them ; and to pretend that the remnant of them which embraced christianity, were the only *Jews* who were not chargable with that crime. And till he vouchsafes to fasten the same consequence upon *St. Paul*, I request that I may for his sake escape his censure ; and that the Dean will once be so ingenuous, as to acknowledge he has injur'd an adversary without any the least cause.

In the rest of the paragraph he argues from my opinion, but represents it most unfairly, and defectively. I shall for brevity sake supply the defects in the parenthesis's which I shall add. If the reader leaves them out, he will have the Dean's words exactly transcribed ; if he puts them in, he will need no other answer. Thus then the Dean goes on:

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*Can the character given to [some only, and not all] dissenters, and some protestants abroad [for whom he professes the highest respect, and to a party of the church of England also] merely upon supposing them clear of the crime imputed to the [other party of the] church, amount to any thing less than fixing the reverse of that character upon [both those parties of] the church of England? Do's not the very application of this passage of scripture to the present case infer this charge? The holy remnant, who had not bowed the knee to Baal, were distinguish'd from the idolatrous Israelites: In the comparison [some protestants abroad, some part of the church of England, and only some of] the dissenters are the holy remnant; they are therefore distinguish'd from the idolatrous crowd of persecutors. Ask now Mr. Peirce who they are, and he will tell you that the church of England is a persecuting church. [That is, That there is a party in the church of England, who are for persecution, and the rest of the crowd of persecutors consists of such in all parties, whether of dissenters, or foreign protestants, who are friends to persecution.]*

But to go on with the Dean.

*He pleads, I know, for himself, that he did not so much as put in the word Baal; but only said, they had not bowed the knee, &c.*

I did



I did not make any complaint of the Dean for putting in the word ; nor did I lay much stress upon my leaving it out. I only thus slightly mention'd it *en passant* : " I did not " so much as put in the word *Baal* ; and " when 'tis added , 'tis evident that only " *persecution* is compar'd to *Baal*. " However the Dean bestows a short paragraph upon answering it.

*An unhappy excuse*, says he, *in my opinion* ; [But in truth 'tis not pleaded as an excuse] *for it plainly shews that Mr. Peirce saw how the reflection pointed ;* [Without doubt he did, *viz.* at *persecution* ; or, if he pleases, at *persecutors* among all parties, his own as well as others] *why else did he not put in the word Baal ? or where was the modesty in leaving it out ?* I design'd to express my sense of the greatness of the evil I was exposing. If I was mistaken in thinking that leaving out the word might abate the offence it might give the guilty, I am not the first in the mistake ; it being not unusual with authors to supply the absence of an *hard* word with an *&c.* or a dash, when the reflection is plain ; and this has been thought to carry some degree of modesty with it. I grant the truth of what the Dean adds : *His not expressing the word is an evidence that he was conscious of the foulness of the*

*charge it carried with it ; and his leaving out a word so easily supplied by every reader, is no justification.* Nor did I ever pretend the contrary.

These are the only misrepresentations from which the Dean has endeavour'd to clear himself ; and since he do's not, neither shall I take notice of the others I charged him with, *Reflect.* p. 44, 46. I wish, for his own sake, he would be so ingenuous as to acknowledge the injury he has done me. And at the same time, I cannot forbear to wish that some nameless authors also, who have lately traduced me and some others, and spread the most notorious and malicious falsehoods, would do us justice in like manner. They will do well to consider, that a righteous God will one day find out those, who think themselves safe now in *privily slandering* their neighbours. But I pray God to give them true repentance.

The Dean at parting is pleased to reflect upon a *Book* of mine, *reprinted since this controversy* ; one principal design of the first part of which was to expose *persecution*, which is an evil the Dean thinks cannot easily be describ'd in worse terms than it deserves. I hope therefore he will not be displeas'd with me for any hard things I have said of it. If I have there made reflections upon particular times, persons, or parties, I am willing to incur censure

sure, as far as the facts upon which they are founded do not appear sufficient to support them. And I hope the reader will be so fair to me as to allow, that I speak impartially against the wickedness when practis'd by either party; for which I appeal to my *Vindic.* P. 33, 34.

But 'tis a hard case, when some men may pursue cruel measures, and others not be allow'd to complain of them. For my own part I can truly say, were but the evil itself as universally abhor'd, and the spirit of persecution as generally laid aside as they ought to be; I should not care if all the books (and among the rest my own) which tend to preserve the memory of protestant persecutions, were for the honour of our religion utterly destroy'd. But alas! as long as that abomination has its well-wishers and zealous advocates, the setting it forth in its true colours, and genuine effects, seems to me very friendly and serviceable to mankind.

The Dean, who is offended with me, for the freedom I have used in reflecting upon some of the Bishops of the church, do's not stick to do the same, if they seem to stand in his way; it being one of that order, if I am not mistaken, he charges in the same page with bringing a *very vile accusation*, and making a *violent attack* upon him. As



As I did not begin with the Dean, so I assure him, I have as little inclination as he can have to *draw on a new controversy* with him. I have but little time for it, and apprehend I may have yet much less; and had I not expected that this answer would have come into a less compass, than I now find it do's, I question whether I should have begun it. He must hereafter allege somewhat more material, or I shall, without troubling the world afresh, trust to the judgment and candour of his readers.

He is pleased to express his *great concern to see in my late writings so much bitterness of spirit against the church, after thirty years indulgence to nonconformists. These, he says, are not the fruits, which were expected from the Toleration.* I am not conscious of a *bitterness of spirit* towards any man, for differing in his judgment from me about the points in controversy between us and the church of *England*. I cannot indeed think of persecution without somewhat of indignation: but where men are against that, and for leaving all men to the full enjoyment of their liberty, in all matters wherein the civil state is not concern'd, I have no displeasure against them for following their own judgments: nay, I should be griev'd to see them restrain'd in the least from doing so, tho'

rho' it were only by *negative discouragements*. But the Dean cannot but know what cause we have had for complaints: and 'tis a hard case indeed, if he will not give the sufferers leave to speak. The government, if I mistake not, has not, during the *indulgence*, had the least cause of complaint against us; but the unkind behaviour (I think I speak modestly) of too many churchmen, both in their actions and writings, will not only excuse, but justify, many hard things which have been said. I purposely avoid descending to particulars; and shall only say, I heartily wish all the Dean's friends were as sincerely disposed to lay aside all *bitterness of spirit* toward us, as I am to forbear any expression which may be provoking to them. But 'tis difficult to speak of things grossly evil in a way that shall not offend such as abet them; and I am very sorry it should have been my lot to treat of such.

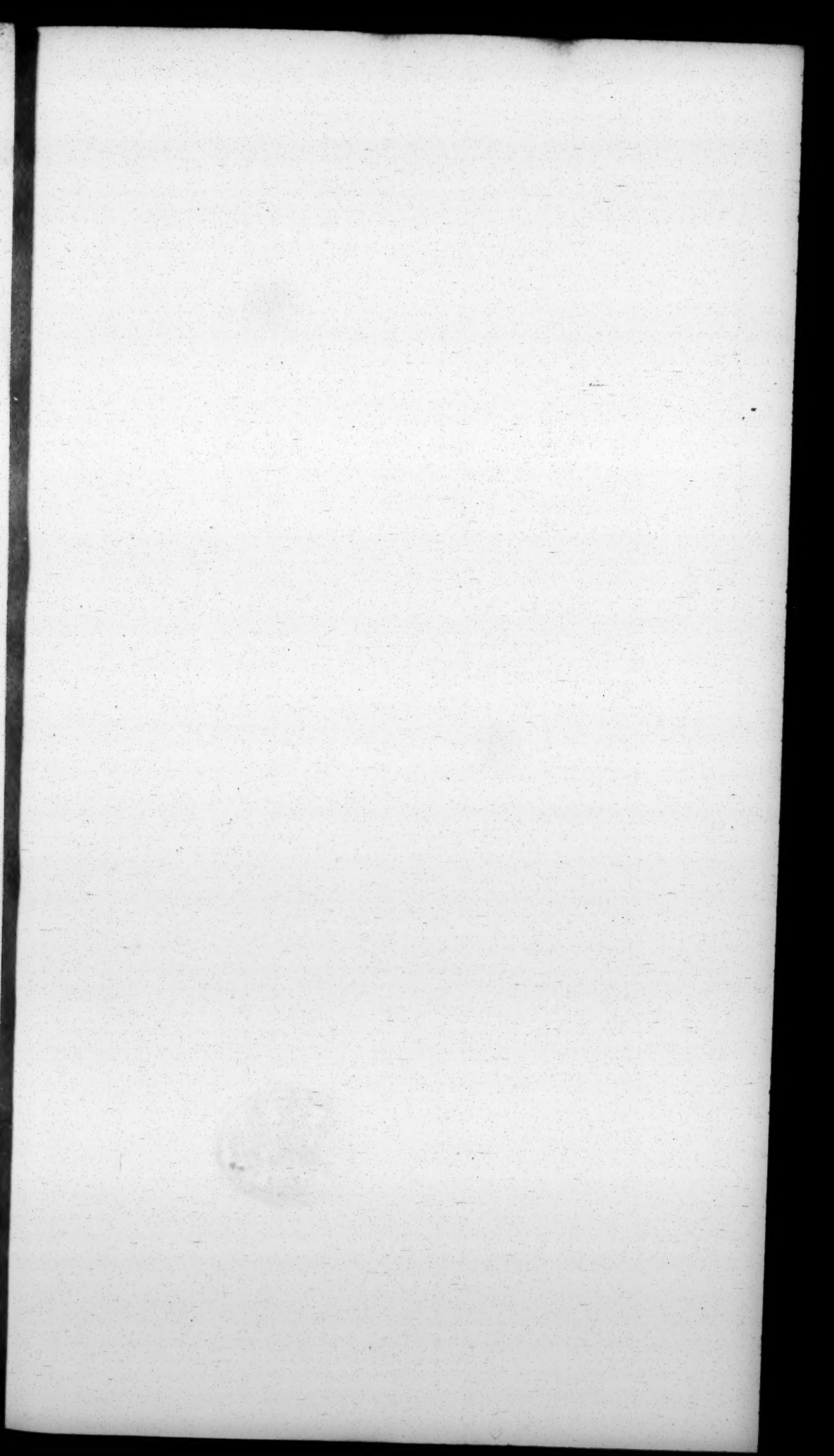
I cannot conclude without just observing, that this is not the only instance, in which the Right Reverend the Bishop of *Bangor* has been ill treated on my account; which has added very much to the affliction of my own ill treatment. Particularly in one of the most infamous papers that was ever suffered in any civiliz'd nation, I, with some others, am charged with subscribing a paper, denying  
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*the divinity of Christ* : and 'tis so said, as that every one is to understand, that I shew about a Letter, which I receiv'd from his Lordship, *encouraging me to go on.* But as in the first place, I can safely declare, that neither I, nor any of my brethren, that I know of, deny the divinity of *Christ*, or ever sign'd such a paper ; so I must in justice protest, as I do, most solemnly, That I never receiv'd one Letter, or one Line in a Letter, from his Lordship, upon any subject whatsoever. This the reader may the more easily believe, since I can with the same solemnity protest, that however ambitious I should have been of that honour ; yet I never gave him the least occasion to write to me, by writing a single Letter or Line to him in my life.

I have now done ; and shall only say at parting, That if the reader is satisfied of the clearness of my defence, he ought never hereafter to trust the Dean in any of the representations he shall think fit to make of my opinion, however plausibly he may seem to talk, without looking himself into my writings. And the same piece of justice, I think, both he and I owe to any adversary the Dean thinks fit to encounter.

F I N I S.





H. Leslie (Chas.)

III. c 31.